

Virginia Department of Veterans Services

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News Release

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Department of Veterans Services Employees Honor Veterans in 8K Run

RICHMOND—Eight employees at the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) plan to honor veterans this Veterans Day by participating in the nTelos 8K. The employees, all from the agency's State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training, chose the 8K as a way to reach out to veterans and eligible family members with information about educational benefits. "Five of us are retired military and we're proud to participate in this event," said Annette Alston, an education specialist for DVS.

The DVS State Approving Agency evaluates and approves educational and training programs offered by educational institutions and businesses. These programs include traditional college and university curriculums as well as programs at technical and trade schools, licensing and certification programs, on the job training, and apprenticeship programs. Once a program is approved, eligible veterans may use their GI Bill entitlement to pay for tuition and other expenses.

"Veterans often don't realize that the GI Bill educational benefits cover more than just college and university programs," said Annie Mosby, Director of the DVS State Approving Agency. "Right now, more than 700 institutions in Virginia are approved. We'd like for as many veterans as possible to be able to take advantage of their GI Bill benefits."

During federal fiscal year 2005, nearly 20,000 veterans in Virginia received \$165.7 million in educational benefits.

When asked if she thinks all of her coworkers will finish the race, Alston responded, "We have all lived most of our lives being apart of a team, so yes, we'll all start together and we'll all finish together."

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--Sidebar--

**Virginia Department of Veterans Services
State Approving Agency Participants**

Annie Mosby
U.S. Army, Drill Sergeant, SFC (Retired)

James Reavis
U.S. Army, Food Service Advisor, SGM (Retired)

Annette Alston
Army National Guard, Operations, NCO MSG (Retired)

Carol Marshall
U.S. Army, Food Service NCO, SSG (Retired)

Ira McClellan
U.S. Marine Corps, Facility Operations Chief MSgt (Retired)

Richard Smith
32 years with the Commonwealth of Virginia

Fran Thomas
State Approving Agency Secretary

Abranda Hilton
State Approving Agency Administrative Assistant